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To: [E-OHPSCA2713.EBSA](#)
Subject: Preventive care for women with no exceptions
Date: Tuesday, August 23, 2011 4:57:50 PM

I join with the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in asking you to accept the recommendations of the Institute of Medicine as pertain to coverage of preventive care under the new health care law, and to reject any exemptions for “religious employers.” These preventive services are a critical element of the new law and would provide countless women better access to necessary health care.

While AAUW believes that “religious refusal” exemptions unjustly deny women access to contraceptive services, others, driven by an ideological distaste for all contraceptive services, are pushing the government to make exemptions even larger. Indeed, some groups are pushing for the exemption to apply to religiously-run health providers, so hospitals with religious affiliations would be exempt from the coverage requirement, even though they employ people of all faiths and ideologies. If granted, this larger exemption would deny access to thousands of women just because of where they work.

This will be a throwback to a time when one was warned not to deliver one’s babies in a Catholic hospital for fear that the baby might be saved at the expense of the mother’s life. I am 82 years old and am fearful that we are denying proper healthcare to women on ideological grounds. It is bad enough that Viagra has not been denied by any health plan bur contraceptive care has.

I urge you to ensure women have access to quality preventive care by accepting IOM’s recommendations and rejecting the proposed religious refusal exemption provisions.

Irene Senter